

MR. POPE'S  
LETTERS  
TO  
A LADY.

[Price Two Shillings.]

MR. POPE'S

LETTERS

TO

A LADY.

[Printed and Sold by]



# L E T T E R S

OF THE LATE

ALEXANDER POPE, Esq. *K*

TO

A L A D Y.

Never before published.



LONDON,

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

THESE Letters, besides the *naiveté* of the style, the quick fallies of an ingenious mind, and the graver observations of reflection and judgment, discover the Writer's Heart to have had a more amiable sensibility, and to be tinctured with more goodness, than his other Writings of this sort do.



It may be proper just to mention, that the Originals of these Letters are in Mr. Doddsley's Possession.



MR.



M R. P O P E ' S  
L E T T E R S.



L E T T E R I.

M A D A M,

Twitenham, Oct. 18.

**W**E are indebted to Heaven  
for all things, and above  
all for our sense and genius (in what-  
ever

ever degree we have it) ; but to fancy yourself indebted to any thing else, moves my anger at your modesty. The regard I must bear you, seriously proceeds from myself alone ; and I will not suffer even one I like so much as Mrs. H. to have a share in causing it. I challenge a kind of relation to you on the *soul's* side, which I take to be better than either on a father's or mother's ; and if you can overlook an ugly *body* (that stands much in the way of any friendship, when it is between different sexes) I shall hope to find you a true and constant kinswoman



man in Apollo. Not that I would place all my pretensions upon that poetical foot, much less confine them to it; I am far more desirous to be admitted as yours, on the more meritorious title of friendship. I have ever believed this as a sacred maxim, that the most ingenious natures were the most sincere; and the most knowing and sensible minds made the best friends. Of all those that I have thought it the felicity of my life to know, I have ever found the most distinguished in capacity, the most distinguished in morality: and those

B

the

the most to be depended on, whom one esteemed so much as to desire they should be so. I beg you to make me no more compliments. I could make you a great many, but I know you neither need them, nor can like them: be so good as to think I do not. In one word, your writings are very good, and very entertaining; but not so good, nor so entertaining, as your life and conversation. One is but the effect and emanation of the other. It will always be a greater pleasure to me, to know you are well, than that you write well, though every time  
you

you tell me the one, I must know the other. I am willing to spare your modesty; and therefore, as to your writing, may perhaps never say more (directly to yourself) than the few verses I send here; which (as a proof of my own modesty too) I made so long ago as the day you sat for your picture, and yet never till now durst confess to you.

Tho' sprightly Sappho force our love and praise,  
A softer wonder my pleas'd soul surveys,  
The mild Erinna, blushing in her bays. }  
So while the sun's broad beam yet strikes the sight,  
All mild appears the moon's more sober light,  
Serene, in virgin majesty, she shines;  
And, un-observed, the glaring sun declines.

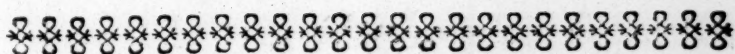


THE brightest wit in the world, without the better qualities of the heart, must meet with this fate; and tends only to endear such a character as I take yours to be. In the better discovery, and fuller conviction of which, I have a strong opinion, I shall grow more and more happy, the longer I live your acquaintance, and (if you will indulge me in so much pleasure)

Your faithful friend, and most  
obliged servant,

A. POPE.

LET-



LETTER II.

MADAM,

Twitenham, Nov. 5.

**T**HOUGH I am extremely obliged by your agreeable letter, I will avoid all mention of the pleasure you give me, that we may have no more words about compliments; which I have often observed people talk themselves into, while they

they endeavour to talk themselves out of. It is no more the diet of friendship and esteem, than a few thin wafers and marmalade were of so hearty a stomach as Sancho's. In a word, I am very proud of my new relation, and like Parnassus much the better, since I found I had so good a neighbour there. Mrs. H——, who lives at court, shall teach two country-folks sincerity; and when I am so happy as to meet you, she shall settle the proportions of that regard, or good-nature, which she can allow you to spare me, from a heart, which is so much her own as yours is.

THAT



THAT lady is the most trusty of friends, if the imitation of Shakespear be yours; for she made me give my opinion of it with assurance it was none of Mrs ——. I honestly liked and praised it, whose-soever it was; there is in it a sensible melancholy, and too true a picture of human life; so true an one, that I can scarce wish the verses yours at the expence of your thinking that way, so early. I rather wish you may love the town (which the author of those lines cannot *immoderately* do) these many years.

It

It is time enough to like, or affect to like, the country, when one is out of love with all but one's-self, and therefore studies to become agreeable or easy to one's-self. Retiring into one's-self is generally the *pis-aller* of mankind. Would you have me describe my solitude and grotto to you? what if, after a long and painted description of them in verse (which the writer I have just been speaking of could better make, if I can guess by that line,

No noise but water, ever friend to thought)

I —

what

what if it ended thus?

What are the falling rills, the pendant shades,  
The morning bow'rs, the evening colonnades;  
But soft recesses for th' uneasy mind,  
To sigh un-heard in, to the passing wind!  
Lo! the struck deer, in some sequester'd part,  
Lies down to die (the arrow in his heart);  
There hid in shades, and wasting day by day,  
Inly he bleeds, and pants his soul away.

If these lines want poetry, they do  
not want sense. God Almighty long  
preserve you from a feeling of them!  
The book you mention, Bruyere's  
Characters, will make any one know  
the world; and I believe at the same

C

time



time despise it (which is a sign it will make one know it thoroughly). It is certainly the proof of a master-hand, that can give such striking likenesses, in such slight sketches, and in so few strokes on each subject. In answer to your question about Shakespear, the book is about a quarter printed, and the number of emendations very great. I have never indulged my own conjectures, but kept meerly to such amendments as are authorized by old editions, in the author's life-time: but I think it will be a year at least before the whole work can be finished.

ed. In reply to your very handsome (I wish it were a very true) compliment upon this head, I only desire you to observe, by what natural, gentle degrees I have sunk to the humble thing I now am: first from a pretending poet to a critick, then to a low translator, lastly to a meer publisher. I am apprehensive I shall be nothing that's of any value, long, except,

Madam,

Your most obliged, and  
most faithful humble  
servant,

A. P O P E.

C 2

I long

I long for your return to town;  
a place I am unfit for, but shall  
not be long out of, as soon as I  
know I may be permitted to  
wait on you there.

LET-



## LETTER III.

MADAM,

Thursday night.

**I**T was an agreeable surprize to me,  
to hear of your settlement in town.  
I lye at my Lord Peterborow's in  
Bolton-street, where any commands  
of yours will reach me to-morrow,  
only on Saturday-evening I am pre-  
engaged. If Mrs. H—— be to be en-  
gaged



22 M R. P O P E ' S

gaged (and if she is by any creature,  
it is by you), I hope she will join us.

I am, with great truth,

Madam,

Your most faithful friend,

and obliged servant,

A. P O P E.

LET-



LETTER IV.

MADAM,

I COULD not play the impertinent so far as to write to you, till I was encouraged to it by a piece of news Mrs H—— tells me, which ought to be the most agreeable in the world to any author, That you are determined to write no more—It is now the time then, not for me only, but

but for every body, to write without fear, or wit: and I shall give you the first example here. But for this assurance, it would be every way too dangerous to correspond with a lady, whose very first sight and very first writings had such an effect, upon a man used to what they call fine sights, and what they call fine writings. Yet he has been dull enough to sleep quietly, after all he has seen, and all he has read; till yours broke in upon his stupidity and indolence, and totally destroyed it. But, God be thanked, you will write no more; so I am in

no danger of increasfing my admiration of you one way; and as to the other, you will never (I have too much reason to fear) open these eyes again with one glimpfe of you.

I AM told, you named lately in a letter a place called Twitenham, with particular diftinction. That you may not be mif-construed and have your meaning mistaken for the future, I must acquaint you, Madam, that the name of the place where Mrs. H—— is, is not Twitenham, but Richmond; which your ignorance in the

D                      geography



geography of these parts has made you confound together. You will unthinkingly do honour to a paltry hermitage (while you speak of Twickenham) where lives a creature altogether unworthy your memory or notice, because he really wishes he had never beheld you, nor yours. You have spoiled him for a solitaire, and a book, all the days of his life; and put him into such a condition, that he thinks of nothing, and enquires of nothing but after a person who has nothing to say to him, and has left him for ever without hope of  
ever

ever again regarding, or pleasing, or entertaining him, much less of seeing him. He has been so mad with the idea of her, as to steal her picture, and passes whole days in sitting before it, talking to himself, and (as some people imagine) making verses; but it is no such matter, for as long as he can get any of hers, he can never turn his head to his own, it is so much better entertained.



## L E T T E R V.

M A D A M,

I AM touched with shame when I  
look on the date of your letter.  
I have answered it a hundred times  
in my own mind, which I assure you  
has few thoughts, either so frequent  
or so lively, as those relating to you.  
I am sensibly obliged by you, in the  
comfort you endeavour to give me  
upon

upon the loss of a friend. It is like the shower we have had this morning, that just makes the drooping trees hold up their heads, but they remain checked and withered at the root: the benediction is but a short relief, though it comes from Heaven itself. The loss of a friend is the loss of life; after that is gone from us, it is all but a gentler decay, and wasting and lingering a little longer. I was the other day forming a wish for a lady's happiness, upon her birth-day: and thinking of the greatest climax of felicity I could raise, step by step, to



end in this—a Friend. I fancy I have succeeded in the gradation, and send you the whole copy to ask your opinion, or (which is much the better reason) to desire you to alter it to your own wish: for I believe you are a woman that can wish for yourself more reasonably, than I can for you. Mrs. H —— made me promise her a copy; and to the end she may value it, I beg it may be transcribed, and sent her by you.

To

To a Lady, on her Birth-day,

1723.

Oh! be thou blest with all that heaven can send :  
Long life, long youth, long pleasure—and a friend !  
Not with those toys the woman-world admire,  
Riches that vex, and vanities that tire :  
Let joy, or ease; let affluence, or content ;  
And the gay conscience of a life well-spent,  
Calm every thought; inspirit every grace;  
Glow in thy heart; and smile upon thy face!  
Let day improve on day, and year on year ;  
Without a pain, a trouble, or a fear!  
And ah! (since death must that dear frame destroy),  
Dye by some sudden extacy of joy :  
In some soft dream may thy mild soul remove,  
And be thy latest gasp, a sigh of love !

PRAY,

P R A Y, Madam, let me see this mended in your copy to Mrs. H——; and let it be an exact scheme of happiness drawn, and I hope enjoyed, by yourself. To whom I assure you I wish it all, as much as you wish it her.

I am always, with true respect,

Madam,

Your most faithful friend,

and most humble servant,

A. P O P E.

LET-



## LETTER VI.

MADAM,

Twitenham, Aug. 29.

**Y**OUR last letter tells me, that if I do not write in less than a month, you will fancy the length of yours frightened me. A consciousness that I had upon me of omitting too long to answer it, made me look (not without some fear and trembling) for

E

the



the date of it : but there happened to be none ; and I hope, either that you have forgot how long it is, or at least that you cannot think it so long as I do, since I writ to you. Indeed a multitude of things (which singly seem trifles, and yet altogether make a vast deal of business, and wholly take up that time which we ought to value above all such things) have from day to day made me wanting, as well to my own greatest pleasure in this, as to my own greatest concerns in other points. If I seem to neglect any friend I have, I do more than seem to

neglect myself, as I find daily by the increasing ill constitution of my body and mind. I still resolve this course shall not, nay I see it cannot, be long; and I determine to retreat within myself to the only business I was born for, and which I am only good for (if I am entitled to use that phrase for any thing). It is great folly to sacrifice one's self, one's time, one's quiet (the very life of life itself), to forms, complaisances, and amusements, which do not inwardly please me, and only please a sort of people who regard me no farther than a

meer instrument of their present idleness, or vanity. To say truth, the lives of those we call great and happy are divided between those two states; and in each of them, we poetical fiddlers make but part of their pleasure, or of their equipage. And the misery is, we, in our turns, are so vain (at least I have been so) as to chuse to pipe without being paid, and so silly to be pleased with piping to those who understand musick less than ourselves. They have put me of late upon a task before I was aware, which I am *sick* and *sore* of: and yet engaged

ged in honour to some persons whom I must neither disobey nor disappoint (I mean two or three in the world only) to go on with it. They make me do as mean a thing as the greatest man of them could do; seem to depend, and to solicit, when I do not want; and make a kind of court to those above my rank, just as they do to those above theirs, when we might much more wisely and agreeably live of ourselves, and to ourselves. You will easily find I am talking of my translating the Odyfsey by subscription: which looks, it must needs look,



look, to all the world as a design of mine both upon fame and money, when in truth I believe I shall get neither; for one I go about without any stomach, and the other I shall not go about at all.

THIS freedom of opening my mind upon my own situation will be a proof of trust, and of an opinion your goodness of nature has made me entertain, that you never profess any degree of good-will without being pretty warm in it. So I tell you my grievances; I hope in God you have  
none,

none, wherewith to make me any return of this kind. I hope that was the only one which you communicated in your last, about Mrs. H—— silence; for which she wanted not reproaches from me; and has since, she says, amply atoned for. I saw a few lines of yours to her, which are more obliging to me than I could have imagined: if you put *my welfare* into the small number of things which you heartily wish (for a sensible person, of either sex, will never wish for many), I ought to be a happier man than I ever yet deserved to be.

UPON

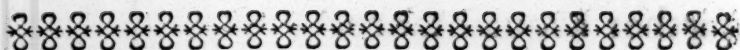
UPON a review of your papers, I have repented of some of the trivial alterations I had thought of, which were very few. I would rather keep them till I have the satisfaction to meet you in the winter, which I must beg earnestly to do; for hitherto methinks you are to me like a spirit of another world, a being I admire, but have no commerce with: I cannot tell but I am writing to a Fairy, who has left me some favours, which I secretly enjoy, and shall think it  
unlucky,

L E T T E R S. 41

unlucky, if not fatal, to part with.  
So pray do not expect your verses till  
farther acquaintance.

F L E T-





## L E T T E R VII.

M A D A M,

Twitenham, Sept. 30, 1722.

**N**O confidence is so great, as that  
one receives from persons one  
knows *may be* believed, and in things  
one is *willing* to believe. I have (at  
last) acquired this; by Mrs. H——  
repeated assurances of a thing I am  
I unfeign-

unfeignedly so desirous of, as your allowing me to correspond with you. In good earnest, there is sometimes in men as well as in women, a great deal of unaffected modesty: and I was sincere all along, when I told her personally, and told you by my silence, that I feared only to seem impertinent, while perhaps I seemed negligent, to you. To tell Mrs. — any thing like what I really thought of her, would have looked so like the common traffick of compliment, that pays only to receive; and to have told it her in distant or bashful terms,

would have appeared so like coldness in my sense of good qualities (which I cannot find out in any one, without feeling, from my nature, at the same time a great warmth for them) that I was quite at a loss what to write, or in what stile, to you. But I am resolved, plainly to get over all objections, and faithfully to assure you, if you will help a bashful man to be past all preliminaries, and forms, I am ready to treat with you for your friendship. I know (without more ado) you have a valuable soul; and wit, sense, and worth enough, to make  
me

me reckon it (provided you will permit it) one of the happinesses of my life to have been made acquainted with you.

I do not know, on the other hand, what you can think of me; but this, for a beginning, I will venture to engage, that whoever takes me for a poet, or a wit (as they call it), takes me for a creature of less value than I am: and that where-ever I profess it, you shall find me a much better man, that is, a much better friend, or at least a much less faulty one, than I  
am



am a poet. That whatever zeal I may have, or whatever regard I may shew, for things I truly am so pleased with as your entertaining writings; yet I shall still have more for your person, and for your health, and for your happiness. I would, with as much readiness, play the apothecary or the nurse, to mend your head-akes, as I would play the critick to improve your verses. I have seriously looked over and over those you intrusted me with; and assure you, Madam, I would as soon cheat in any other trust, as in this. I sincerely tell you,  
I can

I can mend them very little, and only in trifles, not worth writing about; but will tell you every tittle when I have the happiness to see you.

I AM more concerned than you can reasonably believe, for the ill state of health you are at present under: but I will appeal to time, to shew you how sincerely I am (if I live long enough to prove myself what I truly am)

Madam,

Your most faithful servant,

A. POPE.

I am

I am very sick all the while I write  
this letter, which I hope will  
be an excuse for its being so  
scribbled.

LET-



LETTER VIII.

MADAM,

Twitenham, Nov. 9.

IT happened that when I determined to answer yours, by the post that followed my receipt of it, I was prevented from the first proof I have had the happiness to give you of my warmth and readiness, in re-

G                      turning



turning the epitaph, with my sincere condolences with you on that melancholy subject. But nevertheless I resolved to send you the one, though unattended by the other: I begged Mrs. H—— to inclose it, that you might at least see I had not the power to delay a moment the doing what you bid me; especially when the occasion of obeying your commands was such, as must affect every admirer and well-wisher of honour and virtue in the nation.

You

You had it in the very blots, the better to compare the places; and I can only say it was done to the best of my judgement, and to the extent of my sincerity.

I do not wonder that you decline the poetical amusement I proposed to you, at this time. I know (from what little I know of your heart) enough at least to convince me, it must be too deeply concerned at the loss, not only of so great, and so near a relation; but of a good man (a loss

G 2                      this

this age can hardly ever afford to bear, and not often can sustain). Yet perhaps it is one of the best things that can be said of poetry, that it helps us to pass over the toils and troubles of this tiresome journey, our life; as horses are encouraged and spirited up, the better to bear their labour, by the jingling of bells about their heads. Indeed, as to myself, I have been used to this odd cordial, so long, that it has no effect upon me: but you, Madam, are in your honeymoon of poetry; you have seen only the smiles, and enjoyed the caresses,  
of

of Apollo. Nothing is so pleasant to a Muse as the first children of the imagination; but when once she comes to find it meer conjugal duty, and the care of her numerous progeny daily grows upon her, it is all a sour tax for past pleasure. As the Psalmist says on another occasion, the age of a Muse is scarce above five and twenty: all the rest is labour and sorrow. I find by experience that his own fiddle is no great pleasure to a common fidler, after once the first good conceit of himself is lost.

I LONG



I LONG at last to be acquainted with you; and Mrs. H — tells me you shall soon be in town, and I blest with the vision I have so long desired. Pray believe I worship you as much, and send my addresses to you as often, as to any female Saint in Heaven: it is certain I see you as little, unless it be in my sleep; and that way too, holy hermits are visited by the Saints themselves.

I AM, without figures and metaphors, yours: and hope you will  
think,

think, I have spent all my fiction in  
my poetry ; so that I have nothing  
but plain truth left for my prose ;  
with which I am ever,

Madam,

Your faithful

humble servant.

LET-



## L E T T E R IX.

M A D A M,

Five o'clock.

I THINK it a full proof of that  
unlucky star, which upon too ma-  
ny occasions I have experienced; that  
this first, this only day that I should  
2 have

have owned happy beyond expectation (for I did not till yesterday hope to have seen you so soon) I must be forced not to do it. I am too sick (indeed very ill) to go out so far, and lie on a bed at my doctor's house, as a kind of force upon him to get me better with all haste.

I AM scarce able to see these few lines I write; to wish you health and pleasure enough not to miss me to-day, and myself patience to bear

H being



58 M R. P O P E ' S

being absent from you as well as I can  
being ill.

I am truly,

Your faithful servant,

A. P O P E.

LET-



## LETTER X.

MADAM,

Jan. 17, 172 $\frac{2}{3}$ .

**A**FTER a very long expectation and daily hopes of the satisfaction of seeing and conversing with you, I am still deprived of it in a manner that is the most afflicting, because it is occasioned by your ill-

H 2

ness

ness and your misfortune. I can bear my own, I assure you, much better: and thus to find you lost to me, at the time that I hoped to have regained you, doubles the concern I should naturally feel in being deprived of any pleasure whatever.

Mrs. H—— can best express to you the concern of a friend, who esteems and pities: for she has the liberty to express it in her actions, and the satisfaction of attending on you in your indisposition.

I WISH

I wish sincerely your condition were not such as to debar me from telling you in person how truly I am yours. I wish I could do you any little offices of friendship, or give you any amusements, or help you to what people in your present state most want, better spirits. If reading to you, or writing to you, could contribute to entertain your hours, or to raise you to a livelier relish of life, how well should I think my time employed! indeed I should, and think it a much better end of my poor studies, than  
all



all the vanities of fame, or views of a character that way, which engage most men of my fraternity.

IF you thoroughly knew the zeal with which I am your servant, you would take some notice of the advice I would give you, and suffer it to have a weight with you proportionable to the sincerity with which it is given.

I B E G you to do your utmost to  
call to you all the succours, which  
I your

your own good sense and natural reflexion can suggest, to avoid a melancholy way of thinking, and to throw up your spirits by intervals of moderate company ; not to let your distemper fix itself upon your mind at least, though it will not entirely quit your body. Do not indulge too much solitariness. Though most company be not proper or supportable during your illness, force yourself to enter into such as is good and reasonable, where you may have your liberty, and be under no restraint.

W H Y

W H Y will you not come to your friend Mrs. H —, since you are able to go out, and since motion is certainly good for your health? why will you not make any little sets of such as you are easiest with, to sit with you sometimes?

Do not think I have any interested aim in this advice: though I long to see you, and to try to amuse you, I would not for the world be considered as one that would ever require  
for

for my own gratification, any thing that might either be improper or hurtful to you.

P R A Y let me know, by our friend Mrs. H——, if there can be any thing in my power to serve, or to amuse you. But use me so kindly, as not to think ever of writing to me till you are so well as that I may see you, and then it will be needless. Do not even read this, if it be the least trouble to your eyes or head.

I BELIEVE



BELIEVE me, with great respect,  
and the warmest good wishes for your  
speedy recovery,

Madam,

Your most faithful,

and most humble servant,

A. P O P E.

LET-



LETTER XI.

MADAM,

Twitenham, June 2, 1723.

**I**T was an inexpressible pleasure to me to see your letter, as I assure you it had long been a great trouble, to reflect on the melancholy reason of your silence and absence. It was

I 2

that

that only which hindered my writing, not only again, but often, to you; for fear your good-nature should have been prompted to oblige me too much at your own expence, by answering. Indeed I never expressed (and never shall be able to express) more concern and good wishes for you, than I shall ever feel for one of your merit.

I AM sorry, the moment you grow better, to have you snatcht from those, who I may say deserve the pleasure of seeing you in health, for  
 having

having so long lamented and felt your illness.

Mrs. H —, I hope, will find it not impossible to draw you to Richmond: and if not, I dare say will not be long out of Hertfordshire. I want nothing but the same happy pretence she has, of a title through your friendship, and the privilege of her sex, to be there immediately. I cannot but wonder you have not heard from her, though I should wonder if any body else had; for I am told by her family she has had  
much



much of the head-ake at Bath, besides the excuse of a great giddiness occasioned naturally by the waters. I writ to her at the first going, and have not had a word from her; and now you tell me the same thing, I conclude she has been worse than I imagined. I hear she returns on Wednesday, when I shall have the satisfaction (I doubt not) to talk and hear a great deal of Mrs. —.

I wish I could say any thing, either to comfort you when ill, or entertain

tertain you when well. Though nothing could, in the proper proportion of friendship, more affect me than your condition; I have not wanted other occasions of great melancholy, of which the least is the loss of part of my fortune by a late act of parliament.

I AM at present in the afflicting circumstance of taking my last leave of one of the \* truest friends I ever had, and one of the greatest men in all polite learning, as well as the most

\* Bishop Atterbury.

agreeable

agreeable companion, this nation ever had,

I REALLY do not love life so dearly, or so weakly, as to value it on any other score, than for that portion of happiness which a friend only can bestow upon it: or, if I must want that myself, for the pleasure which is next it, of seeing deserving and virtuous people happy. So that indeed I want comfort; and the greatest I can receive from you (at least unless I were so happy as to deserve what I never can) will be to hear you grow better

I

till

till you grow perfectly well, perfectly  
easy, and perfectly happy, which no  
one more sincerely wishes than,

Madam,

Your faithful and obliged  
friend and servant,

A. P O P E.

K

L E T.





## LETTER XII.

MADAM,

Twittenham, Sept. 26, 1723.

**I**T would be a vanity in me to tell you why I trouble you so soon again: I cannot imagine myself of the number of those correspondents whom you call favourite ones; yet I know

know it is thought, that industry may make a man what merit cannot: and if an old maxim of my Lord Oxford's be true, That in England if a man resolve to be any thing, and constantly stick to it, he may (even a Lord Treasurer): if so, I say, it shall not be want of resolution that shall hinder me from being a favourite. In good earnest, I am more ambitious of being so to you, Madam, than I ever was, or ever shall be, of being one to any Prince, or (which is more) any Prince's Minister, in Christendom.

I WISH I could tell you any agreeable news of what your heart is concerned in; but I have a sort of quarrel to Mrs. H—— for not loving herself so well as she does her friends; for those she makes happy, but not herself.

T H E R E is an air of sadness about her which grieves me, and which, I have learnt by experience, will increase upon an indolent (I will not say an affected) resignation to it.

It

It will do so in men, and much more in women, who have a natural softness that sinks them even when reason does not. This I tell you in confidence; and pray give our friend such hints as may put her out of humour with melancholy: your censure, or even your raillery, may have more weight with her than mine: a man cannot either so decently, or so delicately, take upon him to be a physician in these concealed distempers.

You



You see, Madam, I proceed in trusting you with things that nearly concern me. In my last letter I spoke but of a trifle, myself: in this I advance farther, and speak of what touches me more, a friend.

THIS beautiful season will raise up so many rural images and descriptions in a poetical mind, that I expect, you, and all such as you (if there be any such), at least all who are not downright dull translators, like your servant,

I

vant,

vant, must necessarily be productive  
of verses.

I LATELY saw a sketch this way  
on the bower of \* BEDINGTON: I  
could

\* The lines here alluded to are as follows:

In Tempe's shades the living lyre was strung,  
And the first Pope (immortal Phœbus) sung,  
These happy shades, where equal beauty reigns,  
Bold rising hills, slant vales, and far-stretch'd plains,  
The grateful verdure of the waving woods,  
The soothing murmur of the falling floods,  
A nobler boast, a higher glory yield,  
Than that which Phœbus stamp'd on Tempe's field:

All

could wish you tried something in the descriptive way on any subject you please, mixed with vision and moral; like pieces of the old provençal poets, which abound with fancy, and are the most amusing scenes in nature. There are three or four of this kind in Chaucer admirable: "the Flower and the Leaf" every body has been delighted with.

All that can charm the eye, or please the ear,  
Says, Harmony itself inhabits here.

I HAVE.

I HAVE long had an inclination to tell a Fairy tale, the more wild and exotic the better; therefore a *vision*, which is confined to no rules of probability, will take in all the variety and luxuriance of description you will; provided there be an apparent moral to it. I think, one or two of the Persian tales would give one hints for such an invention: and perhaps if the scenes were taken from real places that are known, in order to compliment particular gardens and buildings of a fine taste (as I believe

L several



several of Chaucer's descriptions do, though it is what nobody has observed), it would add great beauty to the whole.

I wish you found such an amusement pleasing to you: if you did but, at leisure, form descriptions from objects in nature itself, which struck you most livelily, I would undertake to find a tale that should bring them all together: which you will think an odd undertaking, but in a piece of this fanciful and imaginary nature I

I

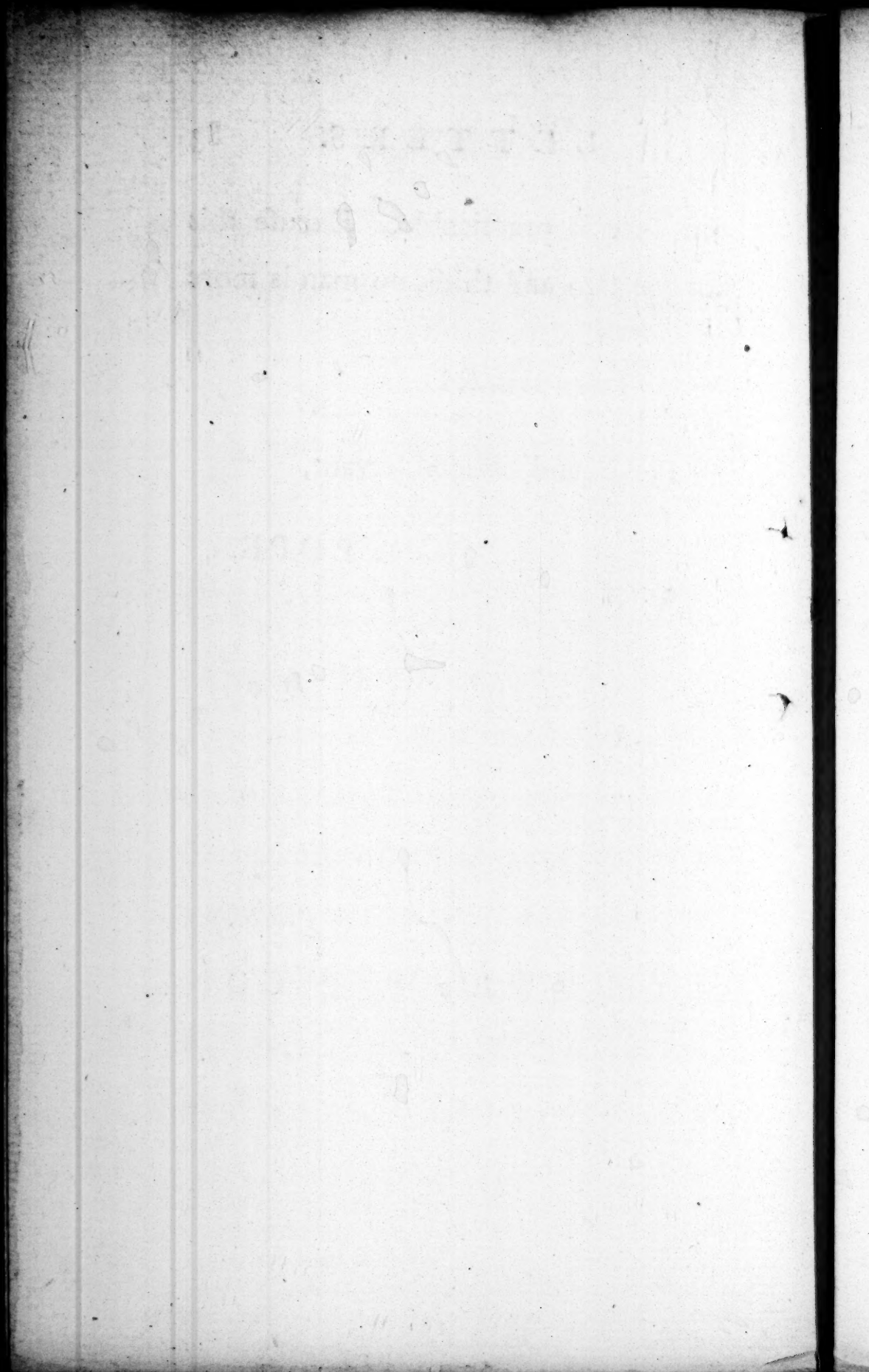
am

am sure is practicable. Excuse this  
long letter; and think no man is more

Your faithful

and obliged servant,

A. POPE.





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